

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Nevada Fish & Wildlife Office
1340 Financial Blvd #234
Reno, NV 89502
775-861-6300
Fax – 861-6301
<http://nevada.fws.gov>

News Release



For Immediate Release

Date: March 21, 2006

Contact: Jeannie Stafford

(775) 861-6300

Tribe Works to Recover Railroad Valley Springfish

Work is underway to restore habitat of the threatened Railroad Valley springfish at the Duckwater Shoshone Reservation by partners that have come together for the first time. The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe (Tribe), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), U. S. Geological Service's Water Resource and Biological Resources Divisions (USGS), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) began restoration efforts in November 2006.

"The Tribe and the Service reached an agreement that made a project possible that will preserve the Tribe's economic goals and water rights and will benefit the springfish and people," said Bob Williams, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office Field Supervisor. "NRCS, USGS, and NDOW joined the Service and the Tribe and made this an even stronger partnership to help move us toward species recovery."

The partners are working to improve recreational opportunities, improve tribal cultural resources, and restore critical habitat for the species. They have already completed the removal of a catfish farm, reconstruction of the stream channel, and removal of non-native fish species. Future plans include returning the springfish to its native habitat, the seeding of native upland and riparian plants, planting of native trees, refurbishing of the irrigation ditch and pipeline, fencing, and building boardwalk and an interpretive display.

"There is a great sense of joy and fulfillment in my heart seeing the restored spring with the stream channel flowing in the location the Great Spirit intended it to go rather than the man-made direction," said Jerry Millett, Tribal Chairman for the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe. "Our goal as a Tribe is to continue into the future. Improving health in the land and water for the preservation of the unique and ancient springfish is part of the Duckwater Peoples legacy for our future generations. The success of the Big Warm Spring Restoration projects is founded in the collaborative process and persistent communication involving the Tribe, the individual tribal business owner, the Service, NDOW, USGS, BLM, NRCS, BIA and the State Water Engineer's Office."

Once the restoration is complete, the Service and the Tribe will pursue a Safe Harbor Agreement for the Railroad Valley springfish. These agreements give assurances to landowners who are good

stewards of the land and agree to restore, enhance, or create habitat for endangered or threatened species. Under this type of agreement, private landowners may pursue the conservation ethic that comes naturally to them, without concern about future restrictions on the use of their property.

###

(Photos available upon request)